the liberty of the lower classes. True to his Legalist training, however, the Emperor was trying to encourage agriculture.

It may be an indication of other great public works of the reign that from about now the irrigation project which makes fruitful the plain about Chengtu, in Szechwan, is said to date. It is reported that Li Ping, a Chin official, led the Min River through a pass which he cut in a mountain, and distributed its waters through a network of canals. Certainly the Emperor was attempting to provide unity by building an extensive system of roads centering in the capital. He also did much to improve the canals, possibly with a similar motive. Apparently with the same objective in mind, he destroyed some of the local walls and other fortifications erected by feudal princes.

The Emperor was an indefatigable traveller. PossiWy from an innate restlessness and desire to see the country, and perhaps with the purpose of personally supervising his officials and so of insuring order, he spent much of his time traversing his domains.

One of Shih Huang Ti's most famous—or infamous—devices for insuring peace and unity was his attempt to suppress the criticisms of his rule by the adherents of others of the philosophical schools than the one he was following. As we have seen, the state of Ch'in had been organized by Wei Yang according to the principles of the Legalists—by severe laws, absolute autocracy, the encouragement of agriculture, and concomitant measures. To this system the rulers of Ch'in naturally attributed much of their success, and Shih Huang Ti sought to extend it to the entire Empire. The last centuries of the Chou, however, had been marked by freedom of thought and discussion and, as a corollary,

by the vigorous denunciation of one school by another. The schools, moreover, concerned themselves largely with government and political theory. It is not strange, therefore, that Shih Huang Ti looked askance at the prospect of the continuation of these disputations. By them his own theories of administration would certainly be pointedly questioned and the continuation of his rule threatened. Criticism had, apparently, already begun—if, indeed, it had ever been absent—when, in response to a memorial of the influential Li Ssu, the opposing schools and the documents on which they based their authority were ordered suppressed.

The memorial rehearsed what was almost certainly the fact—